

PFE ORIGINAL
UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029



SDMS DocID 2187257

SUBJECT: Interview Summary
Jack Sorber
Re: Safety Light Site

3/24/08

FROM: Harry R. Steinmetz (3HS62)
Civil Investigator

TO: File

On March 20, 2008 I interviewed Mr. Jack Sorber at the Safety Light Site, 4150 Old Berwick Rd., Bloomsburg, PA 17815. Mr. Sorber resides at (b) (6)
[REDACTED] He was born on (b) (6)
[REDACTED]

I initially called him to obtain a telephone number or address for a Terry Brown who had been a manager at Safety Light. He said that Brown "disappeared" having originally come to Safety Light via Chicago. Subsequently, we arranged this meeting.

His career at Safety Light began in 1955 when he was hired as a machinist. He progressed to working in the general maintenance shop, then as an equipment designer. He worked at the site until 2007. At one point, there were 300 employees at US Radium ("USR")/Safety Light. When he began working, the lagoons near the Susquehanna River were still in operation. Later they were backfilled and neutralized with limestone. They contained chemicals but their exact identity were unknown to Mr. Sorber. Both silos were in place as he began his career. He believes that they originated through the Atomic Energy Commission who urged US Radium to "dig a pit and place radioactive waste into it."

I questioned military contracts and their relation to USR and Safety Light. He was aware of some work that his employer performed for the military. As far back as the late 1940's USR/Safety Light made a luminous rope for the U.S. Army that marked off mine fields. They also made self-illuminated dials for the Army. He was also aware of work that the company did for who he believes was the U.S. Air Force when they replaced carbon-14 buttons in metascopes. The number of replacements is unknown to Mr. Sorber. USR also made personnel markers that clipped onto soldier's uniforms. Initially they contained radium but later, Strontium-90.

ENFORCEMENT CONFIDENTIAL



USR/Safety Light produced deck markers by the thousands for the U.S. Navy which contained Strontium-90. as he recalled, their period of production was from the mid-1950's until the late 1950's (8 - 10 years). He provided the attached photos which were typical of the deck markers produced.

When the Navy no longer had a use for the deck markers, they were sent back to the site and eventually onto Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Mr. Sorber provided pictures of the self-illuminated deck markers and watch dials that had manufactured for the Navy by USR/Safety Light.

While touring the facility, Mr. Sorber produced a tin, army green box. It is noted on the outside that it belongs to the Army Corps of Engineers and did contain Luminous markers, radioactive, Type III with a "WARNING" sign and Manufactured by U.S. Radium. It is lead-lined and was on-site possibly suggesting that the contents were returned for disposal.

I showed him various account ledgers from the mid-'50's to the early 1960's. each is noted, "Ret'd," "This source returned," "Above unit returned," etc. I asked him if these isotopes were returned "for disposal." They were, in Mr. Sober's opinion. The generators of these wastes were: ITT Industrial labs, Moss-Gordin, National Bureau of standards, U.S. Navy Propellant Plant, Nuclear Products Co., Midwest Solvents Co., Picker X-Ray Corp., Pennsylvania R.R. Co., Naval Supply Center, Dept. of the Navy, Day-Brite Lighting, Inc., Radelin-Kirk, Ltd., Moss-Gordin XXX(?) Cleaner Co., Rohm & Haas and Republic Steel.

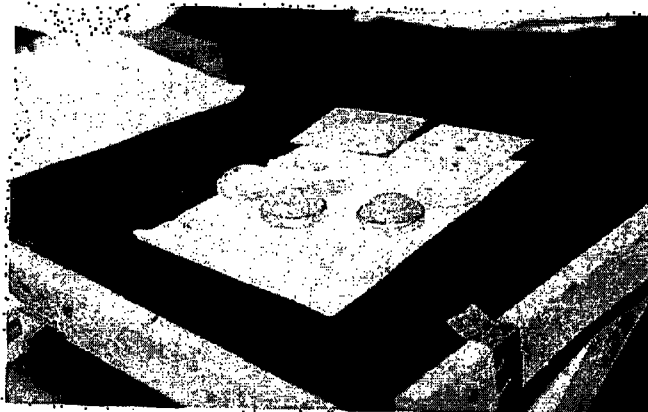
cc: Humane Zia (3RC42)
Mitch Cron (3HS22)

ENFORCEMENT CONFIDENTIAL

Deck
Markers
and clock
dials



Deck Markers



ENFORCEMENT CONFIDENTIAL